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ARMY HIGH COMMAND

Intelligence on Foreign Armies and the Foreign Intelligence Service 1938 to 1945

(OKH Project # 7)

By

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MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF, FOREIGN MILITARY STUDIES BRANCH

SUBJECT: Reviewer's Evaluation of MS # P-041h

1. Combined edit and military review of MS # P-041h, "Intelligence on Foreign Armies and the Foreign Intelligence Service, 1938-45," was completed this date.

2. This report should be read in connection with, and after, MS # P-041i, "Organization and Working Methods of the Intelligence Division...." × The present report describes the specific results achieved by those working methods with regard to the armies of France, Great Britain, the U.S., and Soviet Russia.

3. This report is interesting, but only a specialist would be qualified to decide what parts of it are important and useful. In particular the section dealing with the U.S. Army deals more with American breaches of security than with German intelligence working methods. The author blames most of these breaches on the press, especially certain illustrated magazines. Whether, and how widely, a report making such statements should be distributed is a policy matter to be settled in Washington.

4. Publication of this study in EUCOM is not recommended.

WILLIAM F. ROSS
Captain Artillery
Military Editor

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MS # P-041 h

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Date of Birth: 9 October 1891
Place of Birth: Berlin

Educated at the Cadet Institute, Potsdam from 1903-06 and at the Central Cadet Depot, Berlin-Grosslichterfelde from 1906-10, Kurt von TIPPELSKIRCH was assigned as a lieutenant of infantry in 1909. After serving throughout World War I, toward the end of which he was promoted captain, he remained in the reduced army Germany was allowed to maintain at the end of that war and in 1927 was awarded General Staff Corps status following the usual training.

Between the two world wars von TIPPELSKIRCH held assignments as a General Staff officer with troops from 1926-29, specialist in the Foreign Military Intelligence Branch of the Army General Staff from 1929-33, battalion and later regimental commander from 1933-36 and as chief of the Foreign Military Intelligence Branch from 1936-38.

When World War II broke out, von TIPPELSKICRCH was serving an assignment as Army Chief Intelligence Officer, having been appointed to this post and promoted Generalmajor in 1938. During the war, he commanded the 30th Division in the central sector of the East Front in 1942-43 and then was attached to headquarters of the Eighth Italian Army, also in Russia. In 1944-45 the general, promoted Generalmajor in 1940 and General der Infanterie in 1942, served brief assignments in Italy as acting commander of the Fourth, then of the First and finally of the Fourteenth Army and was then transferred to Mecklenburg as acting commander of the Fourth Army. On 3 May 1945, he was taken prisoner at Ludwigslust, Mecklenburg.

I. INTRODUCTION

In addition to what follows, the over-all study is composed of the following parts:

1. Organization and Working Methods of the Intelligence Division, Army High Command, In Peacetime and During the First Part of World War II. P-041 i, Ch I.

2. The O. Qu. IV From the Beginning of 1941 to the End of 1942. P-041 i, Ch II.

3. The Handling of Information on Foreign Armies in the OKH After Deactivation of the Post of O. Qu. IV, and the Effects of this Measure. P-041 i, Ch III.

4. The Staff Sections, Foreign Armies West and East. P-041 i, Ch IV.

5. The Activities of the Attaché Section. P-041 j.

Concerning the duties of the "Section for Army Matters", which was connected with the Intelligence Service for a fairly long period, there is no manuscript since no consultant was available. The most important data on this sector are contained in the manuscript "The General on Special Assignments and the Section for Army Matters." There is also a brief note on the origin of the Section for Army Matters in Chapter I of MS # P-041 i.

In the following, some individual experiences of a fundamental nature concerning intelligence collection and evaluation will be offered, which were gained from practice during the war. It appears in the order of countries concerned, but in random succession. Naturally, because of the absence of basic data and the shortage of consultants only a few phases

of experience can be presented.

II. FRENCH ARMY

During the period from the outbreak of the war to the western campaign an almost continuous and -- as later examinations showed -- true picture was gained of all organizational details of nearly all French divisions located in the mother country. The basis for this picture was essentially the APO number system, since at that time each French division had only one APO number. Combat orders captured in the fighting at the West Wall, statements by prisoners of war, letters and note books found as well as intelligence reports supplied a multitude of letter addresses bearing the unconcealed number of the unit (regiment, battalion) and the APO number of the division. By analysing these data the composition of most of the divisions could be worked out by patient effort, unless the units concerned were army troops or headquarters reserves. Data from various sources then provided the further necessary information such as the number of the division, name of the commanding general, place of assembly, and area of employment. In this manner tables on the constitution of the divisions could be issued. In certain areas, such as Africa, Syria, and Indo-China, all units had only one common APO number so that even the area of employment was patent from the letter address. A new system, introduced from May 1940 on, with five-digit APO numbers could not remove this deficiency, which was recognized by the French high command. Now each unit indeed had its own APO number, but these were consecutive within each division. Thus it was possible during the western campaign to ascertain the number of the division opposite our

forces immediately from captured letters, statements of prisoners of war, and similar sources.

Certain principles of mobilization deriving from the tradition of the French Army supply further valuable knowledge. As an example, the regiments newly formed in World War II bore the same numbers as the regiments formed and deactivated at the same place in World War I, whose war records were still kept at the place of deactivation. A book on public sale containing a list of these traditional units thus provided pointers on the numbering system of the reserve units of World War I and II. In conjunction with counterintelligence reports, numerous regiments could be identified from these data.

The identity papers of the French soldier -- like the German Soldbuch -- contained precise information on his previous military career, the various units he had belonged to, training courses, etc. On this basis the statements of prisoners of war could be checked and data gained on training and field units of the French Army.

The distribution data on captured orders invariably showed the composition of the larger unit concerned. Hence they were always valuable sources of statistical data on organization and chain of command for the enemy situation reports. For example, distribution data on army-level orders usually listed all corps, divisions, and the army special troops of the sector concerned.

Similar data could be obtained from telephone directories and from sketches of telephone and radio communication circuits, on which normally all headquarters within the jurisdiction concerned were marked in great

detail, often without the use of code names.

Notices in the press frequently contained reports from which the presence of units at a certain community or in its surroundings could be inferred. Thus, athletic performances and parades were described with numbers of regiments and names of commanding officers present being mentioned. By evaluating this information it was possible to gain clues for the location of the French strategic reserves. Obituaries, merchants' advertisements, etc., appearing in the press often contained unit designations or APO numbers of value to the statistical work of the France sub-section.

Military regulations, especially of the French ministry of war, later on also of the government in exile headed by General De Gaulle, occasionally contained clues to morale, from which in turn could be derived an estimate of combat value, as well as personnel changes, from which the officer card file could be brought up to date and the composition of top-level organizations corrected.

An important source of information was the observation of the so-called "railroad distribution stations" by intelligence agents. Through these stations, of which each Army generally had one, ran all rail shipments with personnel and materiel for the supply of the sector concerned. After all details had been gathered on transient shipments, conclusions could be drawn on the composition of the army supplied through this station, and on special events such as arrival of materiel and personnel reserves, transfers and departures of troops.

By way of conclusion the capture of written material of a basic

nature should be mentioned here. For example, the commander of one French army who was taken prisoner carried on his person a roster of all divisions engaged at the front against Germany. Lists of code names, call signals, and frequency distributions of radio networks were frequently captured and could be used with success.

III. BRITISH ARMY

NOTE: The term "British Army," as used in this manuscript, includes the troops from all parts of the British Empire; the term "English Army," as used here, refers to the troops from Great Britain and Northern Ireland alone.

1. English Army

At the outbreak of the war we had a comprehensive picture, true in many details, on the strength and organization of the peacetime English Army and the English Territorial Army.

In the Norwegian campaign an exceedingly large number of important documents were captured by German troops. Although only the units of an English infantry division were employed there, war strength records of the armored troops and of higher and highest command staffs were among the material captured. The troops employed in Norway, lacking all war experience, evidently had carried along the entire stock of manuals and directives called for by regulations and had left it lock, stock, and barrel to the German troops so that even the extensive spoils of the western campaign later on did not reveal many more new facts.

The new units of the English Army subsequent to the flight from

Dunkirk were at first largely unknown. Nor did the knowledge gained in this respect during the campaign in Libya and Egypt and during the fighting in Greece bring much light on this subject. The British troops employed in these theaters were subordinate to the Headquarters, Middle East and carried with them only the directives and orders of this command. Apparently, after Dunkirk, the British high command had issued basic regulations limiting the number of records and directives to be carried by a unit. This seems to have had its effects during the further course of the war in French North Africa, in Italy, and during the Allied Invasion.

Signal intelligence directed against Great Britain produced a number of valuable individual results, but these were not sufficient for a comprehensive picture. As might be expected, the troops maintained strict radio discipline during their maneuvers in the mother country. Signal intelligence in Africa produced good results until summer 1942 through the intercept company employed in this theater. But, since these results covered only the units employed in Libya and Egypt, they were of small significance in the comprehension of the entire English Army. After almost the entire German intercept company had been captured by the British late in the summer of 1942 and the enemy, through captured operational records of this company, had gained a large insight into the working method of the German intercept service, the results of signal intelligence both in the Mediterranean area and in Western Europe dropped to a minimum.

Since throughout the war normal intelligence activity did not provide essential data on the English Army either, the uncertainty of the German

high command in this respect continued up to the Allied Invasion, and even then the Army Intelligence Service could progress only step by step in a laborious piecemeal fashion.

The reason why the secret intelligence service throughout the war never had a suitable network of agents in the British Isles was not neglect on the part of the military authorities. This circumstance must rather be explained by the fact that Hitler, believing in his ability to maintain peace with Great Britain and consequently endeavoring to avoid any occasion for resentment, gave orders before the war to abandon all connections with agents maintained at that time in the British Isles by the intelligence service, and to take up no new connections of this kind. It is obvious that the absence of a network of agents organized in peace-time could never be made good in such an island state as Great Britain after the outbreak of war.

By way of conclusion it remains to be said that the British high command -- favored by the island situation of its country -- succeeded superbly in keeping the organization of the English Army after Dunkirk a secret.

2. <u>The Armies of the Dominions and India</u>

In the fall of 1939 there was adequate information on which Dominion troops could be expected to mobilize in the first phase of the war. Data on the Australian, New Zealand, and South African troops remained essentially up to date through the information gained in the Mediterranean area. But adequate data on the Canadian Army were lacking. With respect to the Canadian troops transferred to Great Britain the same

high command in this respect continued up to the Allied Invasion, and even then the Army Intelligence Service could progress only step by step in a laborious piecemeal fashion.

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is true in effect as what has been said of the English Army.

Concerning the over-all strength and organization of the Indian troops at the outbreak of the war, there was no clear picture. But the Indian units transferred to the Mediterranean area were always recognized soon in their entirety as well as in the details of their composition.

3. Details

Various traditional peculiarities made it difficult for the German troops as well as for agents to identify British and particularly English units. The following examples may serve as illustrations:

In the infantry -- except for the Australians and New Zealanders -- the regiment bore a name rather than a number and was only a replacement and training unit. It continually sent newly-formed battalions to the field army, where they were combined to form so-called brigades. For identification of an infantry brigade of the field army, a report of the name of an infantry regiment was insufficient unless the number of the identified battalion of that regiment was reported at the same time.

Identification of armored units caused difficulties owing to the fact that armored battalions originating from former cavalry units were designated as regiments and retained their old cavalry names while newly formed armored battalions were designated as "tank battalions" and bore numbers.

From the badges and the numbers on identification tags of the individual soldiers no clear conclusions could be drawn since they marked only the training unit such as the regiment or the arm of service such as artillery or armored forces to which the individual belonged.

The same holds for the entries on pay books.

APO numbers did not exist in the British Army. The field postal addresses contained the name of the addressee, the theater of war, and in addition, as far as can be remembered, only the number that the soldier concerned had on his identification tag.

The division patches borne on uniforms and motor vehicles, on the other hand, offered a good tool for identification of British units. Evidently, however, the British high command early realized this weakness in its full significance and in numerous cases, especially for troops at the front or set aside for employment in the near future, ordered the temporary removal of these marks.

From the press, especially from social news, valuable clues could be gained during the first phase of the war. But after Dunkirk at the latest the British high command issued very strict censorship regulations so that this source went dry, too.

Finally it should be mentioned that the British high command was superbly clever at steering misleading information on strengths, organization, and distribution of the British Army and on its intentions into the hands of the intelligence service. Owing to the failure of the intelligence service in all its activities against the British Army, only expert intelligence evaluators were capable of recognizing this deceptive material as such, and even they only in exceptional cases.

IV. UNITED STATES ARMY

For an estimate of the readiness of the US units for employment the following characteristics were of great importance:

1. The speed with which the divisions were formed and — as a basis for it — the available trained and untrained human reserves as well as the production of the armament industry were roughly known from intelligence reports, from press and radio publications and from attaché reports of previous years and were supplemented by further information during the war.

2. As soon as a division had finished its training and its departure from the camp where it had been trained was impending it received its APO number. This was generally the sign that it was ready for employment.

3. The next clue was the appearance of this division, ascertained mostly by the secret intelligence agents through motor vehicle markings and conversations, in the area of one of the known ports of embarkation on the eastern coast of the United States. From this the conclusion could be drawn that the embarkation of the division for Europe was immediately impending.

4. On the troop and materiel convoys from the US to Europe, which in part were run on a regular schedule, there was a great deal of certainty from the results of signal intercepts. Intelligence reports provided supplementary data.

From the coincidence in time of the transfer of a division to the east coast with the departure of a major troop convoy the embarkation of this division could be inferred.

5. Shortly after arrival in the British Isles the intelligence service usually reported motor vehicle and uniform markings of the division, which had been observed during disembarkation or transfer to

the billets or had been ascertained through conversations between agents and US soldiers.

Through a combination of various individual reports it was then possible to follow the route of most of the American divisions from the area of the activation to England and thus always to have a clear picture of the state of the American buildup for the invasion of France. Indeed, in the course of the Invasion and during the fighting in Northern France, no units -- either British or US -- appeared, the employment of which had not been expected on the basis of available information.

Valuable information was gained from press and radio, particularly during the early phase. They produced not only accounts of new activations, assignment of command posts, evaluations of senior officers, opinions on tactics, combat experience, and the like, but in the magazines there also appeared articles on arms and equipment, and on the various types of tanks, sometimes with accurate technical data. Frequently, novel pieces of equipment were revealed with considerable accuracy before their employment at the front. I will mention only the close-combat anti-tank weapon with rocket launcher known as "bazooka" or "stove-pipe" which had been described in detail in the press even before its first use in Tunisia. The German Panzerschreck was designed in imitation of this weapon.

The significance of motor vehicle and uniform markings has already been briefly touched upon. Above all, motor vehicle markings were always of decisive significance for intelligence, since they could be observed without difficulty even by little trained eyes. A table listing the numerous vehicle markings and indicating the units to which they belonged,

which was derived from American magazines and supplemented by PW statements and intelligence reports, facilitated evaluation.

The signal intelligence, particularly in the first period of its activity in Africa and Sicily, brought excellent results, and also later very good reports continued to flow from this source. This applies primarily to the radio communications of the armored forces.

V. SOVIET ARMY

Preliminary Note: Since no consultants were available who had been working in the Eastern Intelligence Section over a long period, only the following points can be listed here.

1. Information from prisoners of war and from deserters was of decisive importance. From 1942 on Russian officers and intelligence specialists, especially generals and general staff officers, were screened in the prison camps and invited to collaborate. They provided complete information on all noteworthy subjects such as tactics, supply organization, training, branches of service, replacement army, tank production, manpower potential, forces in Eastern Siberia. As far as possible all these accounts and statements were checked against data from other sources or reports on the same subject drawn up independently by other consultants. As a rule they turned out to be true.

Numerous individual items could also be ascertained by means of questionnaires sent to all prisoner of war camps by the Eastern Intelligence Branch.

2. Signal Intelligence was as important as prisoner of war statements, particularly for current estimates of the enemy situation. De-

ciphering of Russian radio communications in general proceeded satisfactorily. When the codes were changed we usually succeeded in breaking them again within about two weeks.

Thus for example it was possible, from the results of signal intelligence supplemented by reports of the troops, prisoner of war and deserter statements, results of Air Force reconnaissance, and a few agent's reports, to gain a flawless picture of the Russian assembly for an offensive on both sides of Stalingrad and to clearly recognize even the expected directions of thrusts.

VI. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS REGARDING VARIOUS COUNTRIES

1. Signal intelligence, as mentioned already several times, made available the following data:

a. Decoding of radio messages supplied mostly tactical details, whereas decisive messages of a strategic character could be deciphered less frequently. Nevertheless the traffic density of incoming messages was sufficient to convey a very good picture of the enemy situation.

b. Radio Networks. Even when the decoding of radio messages was impossible, conclusions of a tactical nature could frequently be drawn from observation of the radio network pattern, occasionally even on a major scale. It was possible te infer organization, chain of command, and number of units employed from the observation of enemy command radio networks. Changes in this picture lead to appropriate tactical conclusions.

c. Location of enemy radio stations and relay stations by direction finding techniques frequently permitted conclusions on the

transfer of command posts and on changes in enemy conduct that might follow in their train, such as the formation of points of main effort, the beginning of a withdrawal, the preparation of local offensives or local attacks.

d. Change of radio codes often was a clear indication of impending offensives, especially with the British high command. An exception in this respect was that during the Africa campaign a British radio station could be overheard daily, reporting the exact state of readiness for employment of all enemy tanks in Libya and Egypt. The decoding of these messages, which was successfully accomplished over a long period, provided a valuable basis for Rommel's strategy.

2. Cover and deception material, which was disseminated through various channels by the enemy intelligence services, occasionally facilitated correct conclusions on the enemy's real intentions. Prior to the English and American landing in French North Africa, for example, reports of an impending action against Dakar were played into the hands of German intelligence agents to such an extent and through so many ways that an attempt at deception could be inferred with certainty, with the aim of disguising a major operation at some other place. In the same manner the numerous pieces of information concerning actions planned against Southern France and the Balkans, spread prior to the Allied landings on Sicily and in Southern Italy, were regarded as diversionary maneuvers.

3. Changes in command functions of senior officers, which mostly became known through press and radio, permitted conclusions for an estimate of enemy intentions. The fact, for example, that Montgomery

after the African campaign left for a new assignment to England, in conjunction with information on the removal of seasoned units and many landing vessels from the Mediterranean area to the British Isles, showed that the center of gravity of the combined Anglo-American offensive was shifting to the Atlantic front and that the Mediterranean area would thenceforth be only a secondary theater.

4. Letters from casualties or prisoners of war, if examined regularly, yielded not only clear indications of the morale of the troops, their employment up to that time, and losses, but frequently, despite all censorship regulations, also gave valuable information on plans, new weapons, equipment, troop locations, and similar important matters.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF GERMAN INTELLIGENCE PUBLICATIONS

Designation	Contents (most important points)	Frequency	Distribution
Situation Reports (West & East separately)	Developments in the enemy situation, unit identifications, new facts on organization, chain of command, etc.	daily or twice daily	Including Armies
Situation Maps	Location of all major enemy units	"	"
Brief Enemy Situation Estimates	New facts on enemy strategic intentions	daily	Including Army Groups
Major Enemy Situation Estimates	Summary of enemy strategic intentions	on request	Usually only to OKW, CGS, Army G-3, Navy, Air Force
National Surveys	Summary of all statistical information	longer periods or on request	Including Armies
Special research studies	All available information on any subject	on request	Usually only OKW, CGS, & Army G-3
Order of Battle reports	Statistical data of tactical intelligence value at Div. level	as available	Including Divisions
Handbooks	Statistical data of value for tactical or training purposes at troop level	as available	Including Companies
Enemy personality reports	Personal data on enemy commanders	as required	Including Army Groups
Other routine intelligence reports	Enemy strength, organization, APO code, etc	as required	Including Division G-2's
One-time Reports (West & East separately)	Specific tactical or technical subjects; questionnaires to the troops	as required	Including Armies
Special research projects	Reports on fortifications, tactics, technical subjects, etc.	as required	According to contents